



State of Arizona
Department of Education

Tom Horne
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

CN# 04-04

MEMORANDUM

To: Child Nutrition Program Sponsors

From: Lynne Dulin, Director
Arizona Department of Education, Student Services Division

Date: September 8, 2003

RE: Enhancements and Changes to Direct Certification System

We have enhanced our Direct Certification System to assist you in determining the students who are currently receiving DES benefits.

- DES currently updates **nightly** rather than the 15th of the month. This means you have access to the most current eligibility information that DES has available.
- Beginning mid-September, an additional option will be available.
Option 4 (Case Number Search Method) can be used to verify case numbers. Simply enter the case number and match results will indicate the student's first and last name, date of birth, and Mother's first name.

We recently issued memo CN# 01-04: Direct Certification Clarification, along with a revised CNP Direct Certification Manual. **Part 4 on page three of the memo indicates that schools must call DES to verify case numbers that did not match. This policy has changed due to the enhancement of our Direct Certification System.**

Option 4 (Case Number Method) can be used to verify case numbers. Schools may call DES to verify case numbers, however the Direct Certification System provides schools with the same up-to-date information DES has available. Students who do not match are given temporary approval for 45 days. School Food Authorities (SFA's) must conduct a match for those students a minimum of 2 times over the 45 days.

Question: How is it possible that one child in a household matched and another child from the same household cannot be directly certified?

Answer: If one child in a household matches and one does not it is because the household did not enter the child's name on their application to DES for food stamps or cash assistance. It is then the families' responsibility to contact DES and add the child to their DES application.

The SFA can grant that child temporary free approval for up to 45 days. The SFA may want to contact the parent and notify them that they need to add the child to their DES application. If the child does not match prior to 45 days, the child must be placed in the paid category.

Question: Is Direct Certification required for Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCI)?

Answer: Only if day students are attending the RCCI. The RCCI is responsible for conducting a match for the day students only.

If you have questions regarding this memo, please contact your assigned specialist.

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Attached is the revised page 3 from memo CN# 01-04 dated August 15, 2003.

If a household submits an application with a Food Stamp or Cash Assistance case number and that child is not listed on the State Match results, what additional steps must be taken by the SFA to determine whether or not the case number provided is valid?

1. To obtain match data for students that were not included in the State Match, the SFA must first attempt to verify those children either via Data Entry or File Upload.
2. If the child cannot be directly certified via Data Entry or File Upload, the SFA may then temporarily approve that child for free meals for up to 45 days. The SFA shall mail a Direct Certification Notification of Temporary Approval to the household notifying them of the 45-day temporary approval. The Direct Certification Notification of Temporary Approval letter is available online at: <http://www.ade.az.gov/health-safety/cnp/nslp/parentforms.asp>
3. Thirty days after the initial State Match was conducted, the SFA should conduct a File Upload or Data Entry to verify the eligibility of those children that were not included in the State Match results.
4. If after the File Upload or Data Entry, the child can still not be directly certified, the SFA can verify case numbers using the Case Number Search Method. SFAs must match for that child a minimum of two times during the temporary approval period (45 days). SFAs may contact the Department of Economic Security to verify the case number, however it is not required. DES contact information is available online at: <http://www.de.state.az.us/faa/AllZipsServByEachSite.asp>
5. If it is determined that the child is not eligible to receive benefits, or that the case number provided on the application is invalid, the household must be given 10 days advance, written notice that free meal benefits will be terminated. The first day of the 10-day advance notice is the day that the Notification of Adverse Action is mailed. The Notification of Adverse Action is available online at: <http://www.ade.az.gov/health-safety/cnp/nslp/parentforms.asp>. The Notification of Adverse Action must be accompanied by an application and parent letter.
6. If a DES official indicates that a household's application for FSP, CA, or TANF benefits is pending approval, and the child's 45-day temporary approval has expired, the child must be placed in the paid category and Notification of Adverse Action must be mailed to the household. **An SFA may only grant one Direct Certification 45-day temporary approval per household.**